

## On the efficiency of placement service and programme placement at the public employment offices in Sweden

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## **discussion paper**

FS I 01 - 208

### **On the Efficiency of Placement Service and Programme Placement at the Public Employment Offices in Sweden**

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## **Abstract**

This paper is a summary of three implementation studies on the efficiency of job placement service and programme placement at public employment service offices in Sweden. By the research design "Comparisons by pairs of offices under matched control of external independent variables" the studies aim to characterize good employment office management practices. The research design, the methods used and the results reached are presented and discussed. Specifically, the paper proposes that good office management practices are characterized by a high ability to give self-service and assistance to self-service, and to give priority to individualised service to employers.

## **Zusammenfassung**

Dieser Bericht ist eine Zusammenfassung von drei Studien zur Effizienz der Arbeitsvermittlung und Programmteilnahme in identischen Arbeitsämtern. Durch die Untersuchungsmethode "Paarweiser Vergleich von Arbeitsämtern mit gleichen äußeren Verhältnissen" wird ein Versuch gemacht, gute Verwaltungspraxis der Arbeitsämter zu charakterisieren. In diesem Bericht werden Untersuchungsmethode und Ergebnisse beschrieben und erörtert. Es zeigt sich, dass die Komponenten einer guten Verwaltungspraxis von hohem Maß aus einer guten Infrastruktur zur Selbstbedienung für Arbeitssuchende und individualisierten Diensten an Arbeitgebern bestehen.

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## Introduction

The following is a condensed English summary of three studies on the implementation of placement service, the use of labour market training programmes and firm oriented work at Public Employment Service (PES) level carried out at the Swedish National Audit Office (Riksrevisionsverket, RRV). RRV is the Supreme Audit Institution of Sweden and selects independently the agencies and activities which are to be the subjects of its audits and the audit methods which are to be used, and is solely responsible for the content of its audit reports.

In Sweden, the National Labour Market Board (AMS) administers active labour market policy programmes and runs the network of local public employment offices and an internet service on vacancies and applicants for work. The three above mentioned RRV audits in the PES area therefore relate primarily to the tasks and responsibilities of AMS, although some of the recommendations would require action by Parliament to change legislation.

The three studies attempt to identify internal local employment office management practices that are conducive to good performance and all of them have been based on the same research design and methods. The aim of this summary is to present and discuss the design and methods used and the results reached.

The summary is above all built on the following RRV-reports:

Effektiviteten i arbetsförmedlingen, RRV 1999:15; (The Placement Service Study),

Effektivare arbetsmarknadsutbildning, RRV 1999:45; (The Labour Market Training Study),

Arbetsförmedlingens företagsinriktade arbete, RRV 2001:2; (The Study on Firm Oriented Work),

Effektivare arbetsförmedling, RRV 2001:15; (RRV's assembled judgements on the basis of its audits on active labour market programmes).

The author of this summary is an audit director at RRV, and has been project manager or project worker to the mentioned studies and is here responsible for the presentation of the research design, the methods and the results. The presented recommendations and conclusions are identical with those drawn by RRV in the reports.

## **I. Official Goals for the Public Employment Service Offices**

Between 1990 and 1994 the employment opportunities in the Swedish economy decreased by 560,000. The unemployment rate increased from 1.6 per cent of labour force (LF) to 8.0 and the participation in labour market policy programmes from 1.4 per cent of labour force to 5.3 per cent.

**Unemployment in per cent of LF, Participation in programmes in per cent of LF and Employment in per cent of the population 20 – 64 years, 1990 – 2000.**

Year	Unemployment	Participation in progr.	Employment
1990	1.6	1.4	86.4
1991	3.0	1.9	84.6
1992	5.2	3.6	81.1
1993	8.2	4.5	76.7
1994	8.0	5.3	75.5
1995	7.7	4.4	76.0
1996	8.1	4.5	75.5
1997	8.0	4.5	74.6
1998	6.5	4.0	75.3
1999	5.6	3.3	76.5
2000	4.7	2.6	77.8

Source: AMS and SCB (Statistical Office Sweden)

A stabilisation of the open unemployment occurred after 1994 and since 1998 there has been a decrease in unemployment and participation in programmes and an increase in employment.

The quantified overriding or principal goals ("överordnade mål") for the Swedish labour market policy are since 1996 that of an open unemployment rate of 4 per cent of labour force together with since 1998 that of an employment rate of 80 per cent of the population aged 20 – 64 years. In order to reach the overriding goals the

following effectiveness goals ("övergripande effektmål") for the labour market authority were valid during the year 2000 (the first three have been valid since 1997):

- Keep the duration time of vacancies down
- Diminish long term unemployment
- Counteract long term registration at the employment offices
- Increase the flexibility on the labour market.

The Government has operationalised those effectiveness goals to quantified goals which within the labour market authority are settled to the local employment offices. During the year 2000 seven such quantitative operational goals ("verksamhetsmål") were valid:

- the fraction of employers (who had notified vacancies to the PES) who had been able to recruit within agreed time,
- the fraction of participants in labour market training who had got a job on the open market,
- the number of long term unemployed
- and long term registered at the end of the fiscal year,
- that all unemployed young persons must have been offered a job or a suitable program within 100 days of registration,
- the number of handicapped who should be given suitable employment,
- and finally the average level of wage-subsidies.

During 2000/2001 the government gave guidelines for the labour market policy under the upward economic situation. According to governmental propositions (1999/2000:98 and 1999/2000:139) contributions to fill vacancies and counteract "bottlenecks" in production together with contributions to the long term unemployed and long term registered should be given priority. A well functioning unemployment insurance with sharpened requirements on being an active applicant for work would increase labour market flexibility. It was said that the employment offices shall adjust its contributions in such a way that the long term registered applicants for work are in the frame of a new activity - "aktivitetsgarantin" - guaranteed to take part in programmes to get a job on the open market and that vacancies are filled as fast as possible.



## **II. Swedish Studies on Differences in Efficiency between Public Employment Offices**

Swedish research results indicate great differences in efficiency between public employment offices. In a production frontier analysis (Althin and Behrenz, 1997) it was shown how variations in input such as number of staff and office space affect output such as job placements and labour market programme placements and attribute measurements such as unemployment duration times and vacancy duration times at every single employment office (around 350) during the 1992 – 1995 period. According to this DEA-study (Data Envelopment Analysis) the least efficient office should be able to produce its output with 72 per cent less input (on the whole the results indicated that potentially input could be reduced by 1/3 without a reduction in output).

An attempt was made to investigate how much of the differences in efficiency that could be explained by differences in external variables as the number of unemployed, vacancies and the number of inhabitants in the local area surrounding the offices. The results indicated that such factors affect the differences in efficiency only to a very small extent.

But according to a regression analysis (Sjöstrand, 1997) based on 308 offices during 1994, about 70 percent of the differences in job placement results is explained by differences in external variables out of the influence of the employment offices. About 30 percent of the differences in efficiency might therefore be explained by differences in the implementation of policy activities on the local level.

During 1997 – 2001 the RRV carried out some studies in order to identify those internal local employment office management practices which best support the achievement of the overriding goals for labour market policy. Three of the studies were benchmarking studies where one tried to solve the problem caused by differences in external factors by the same method. The offices which then showed the best results concerning job placements and vacancies filled were identified, and considered better in achieving the overriding goals, and their internal management practices were investigated and compared to those of less efficient offices. In the following sections III and IV a description of the research design and the methods used are given. The findings in the three implementation studies are presented in sections V and VI, and recommendations and conclusions in sections VII and VIII.

### **III. The Main Issue of the three RRV-studies**

The three studies in the above mentioned area carried out at the RRV tried above all to give answers to the following two head questions:

- 1) Can differences between employment offices concerning the outcome measured in terms of job placement and vacancies filled be explained by differences in the implementation of different labour market policy activities at the local level?

and

- 2) What characterizes good internal employment office management practices?

The studies are focused on the implementation of placement service and programme placement, the use of labour market training programmes at the local level and on firm oriented work at office level. In all of them the research design "Comparisons by pairs of offices under matched control of external independent variables" is used. The empirical material comes from the longitudinal database "Händel" on registered applicants for work and vacancies at the National Labour Market Board (AMS), from Statistical Office Sweden's (SCB) statistics on local labour markets and from RRV's own questionnaires and interviews directed to staff at employment offices.

### **IV. The Research Design: Comparisons by Pairs under matched Control of External Independent Variables**

As an alternative to a study on all about 350 employment offices in Sweden (as in the above mentioned DEA-analysis) or a random sample of offices, a "strategical" sample of offices which fulfilled representative requirements and differences in the outcome was chosen. Thereby the researchers faced the problem to find employment offices which differed in the dependent variable (the outcome measured in terms of job placements and vacancies filled according to a goal/objective fulfilment analysis) but which at the same time were as similar in so many external independent variables as possible (i. e. in explanatory variables out of the influence of the employment offices) and then study how the offices differed in the internal independent variables they could influence (the implementation of policy activities according to interviews, questionnaires and labour market statistics).

The aim of this approach was to explain differences in efficiency by studying and analysing the factors which were expected to affect the outcome of placement service, programme placement, labour market training and firm oriented work. Any differences in results in the comparisons between offices should mainly reflect differences in the internal work of the offices.

The research design contained four steps where the researchers had to

- 1) Find offices which are similar in the sense that as many external independent variables as possible are about the same: variables which the office can not influence, for example the firm structure and the educational structure in the local labour market and the number of staff at the employment office (Cluster analysis).
- 2) Find pairs of offices among those similar offices in which the two offices are significantly different in the dependent variables: the outcome measured in terms of job placements and vacancies filled (Goal/objective fulfilment analysis)

then

- 3) Settle the strategical sample of pairs of offices which makes it possible to compare pairs in which the two offices are significantly different in the dependent variables (the outcome), and as reference; pairs in which the two offices are similar in the dependent variables (Selection of the pairs in the strategical sample)

and finally

- 4) Study how the internal independent variables (variables the offices can influence, for example the time used for firm oriented work) differ between the offices in every pair (Implementation analysis).

## **The Placement Service Study**

First step:

The basis was an assortment of local labour markets carried out by SCB. The 284 municipalities of Sweden had been put together into 110 local labour markets (an inhabitant in a local labour market can reach his workplace by commuting daily from his home). These local labour markets had then been divided into 10 different employment regions by cluster analysis. Each employment region consisted of non-geographically connected local labour markets which were similar according to 5 variables; industrial structure, firm structure, educational structure, number of inhabitants and size of the local labour market. (A similar cluster analysis, used in the

study on firm oriented work, has also been carried out by the National Office for Development and Industrial Policy (NUTEK)).

From each employment region 3 local labour markets with employment offices similar in respect to staff resources (number of full time working employment officers according to information from AMS) were chosen.

Among those 3 employment offices the 2 were chosen which were most similar (according to statistics from the "Händel" database at AMS) in:

- the number of registered jobseekers/vacancy
- the fraction of non Nordic registered jobseekers
- the fraction of handicapped registered jobseekers

This gave 10 pairs of employment offices similar according to 4 independent external variables besides those external variables controlled for in the cluster analysis from SCB and NUTEK mentioned above. (See example for 2 pairs. Table 1 in Appendices.)

Second step:

A goal fulfilment analysis based on data from "Händel" was carried out concerning the outcome of job placements and vacancies filled during a year at the 20 employment offices in the 10 pairs.

The job placements results concerned two indicators:

- the fraction of registered jobseekers in 1997 who had got a job on the open market by the end of March 1998,
- the fraction of those who finished a labour market policy programme in 1997 who had got a job on the open market by the end of March 1998,

The results of vacancies filled also concerned two indicators:

- the fraction of notified vacancies filled by referrals from the employment offices during 1997,
- the fraction of referred job seekers at the employment offices who had got the referred job during 1997.

In 5 pairs the offices showed a significant statistical difference in outcome according to Chi Square tests (an example is given in Table 2 in Appendices).

Third step:

The "strategical" sample was settled out by choosing 3 pairs with statistically significant differences between the offices in outcome and 1 pair with no such difference. This latter pair has been used as a frame of reference for explanations of differences in outcome in the comparisons between the offices in the other 3 pairs. The 4 pairs together represented the capital area, the southern city area, the forest counties and the county capitals.

## **The Labour Market Training Study**

First step:

The method used to get 10 pairs of employment offices (which had a certain minimum volume of placements in vocational training) similar according to independent external variables was identical to that of the Placement Service Study.

Second step:

The objective fulfilment analysis in this case was to find pairs of offices with significant differences in the fraction of jobseekers obtaining a job on the open market after attending labour market training programmes.

The outcome results concerned only the indicator:

- the fraction of those who finished a labour market training programme during 1997 who had got a job on the open market by the end of March 1998.

In three pairs the offices showed a significant statistical difference in outcome.

Third step:

The strategical sample was settled to 3 pairs with statistically significant differences in the outcome variable and as a reference 1 pair with no such a difference.

## **The Study on Firm Oriented Work**

First step:

The same method, but implemented on the assortment on local labour markets from NUTEK, as in the two former studies was used to get 10 pairs of similar employment offices.

Second step:

The outcome results concerned 4 indicators:

- the fraction of registered jobseekers in 1999 who had got a job on the open market by the end of March 2000.
- the fraction of registered jobseekers in 1999 who were part-time unemployed, temporary employed or had wage-subsidized employment by the end of March 2000.
- the fraction of notified vacancies filled by referrals from the employment offices during 1999.
- the fraction of referred jobseekers at the employment office who had got the referred job during 1999.

In 4 pairs the offices showed a clear significant statistical difference in outcome.

Third step:

The strategical sample was settled to the above mentioned 4 pairs and 1 reference pair which did not show such a significant statistical difference in outcome.

Altogether, the three studies are based on 26 different employment offices (13 pairs) representing the capital area, the city area, the county capitals, the forest counties and the rural areas during a downward economic situation (1997) and an upward situation (1999).

## **V. The Analyses on Implementation at Office Level**

### **1. The Aim of the Implementation Analysis:**

#### *The Placement Service Study*

The audit questions in this study were:

What is the significance (the importance) of differences in:

- office organisation and technical equipment?
- working methods of the employment offices?
- volume of placements in labour market programmes?

- composition of labour market programmes?
- priority and fulfilment of local operational goals?

and

Do offices with the best outcome show the worst results concerning the long- term unemployment and long-term registration?

### *The Labour Market Training Study*

The study focused on the goal of growth in employment; that labour market training should result in a job on the open market. The following audit questions, expected to explain differences in efficiency, were formulated.

What is the importance for the outcome of labour market training of differences in

- the way to organise the work with the applicants for work?
- the way to organise and carry out the procurement of labour market training courses?
- the way to steer strategically and to give priority to different local operational goals?
- the way to recruit participants to training programs?

### *The Study on Firm Oriented Work*

The aim of this study was to identify those components in the firm oriented work of the offices which further good results concerning job placements and vacancies filled. The study also tried to identify obstacles to an efficient firm oriented work.

By interviewing placement officers at some public employment service offices the notion of firm oriented work could be said consisting of the following components (a – e):

- a) Individualised service to employers (receiving orders, matching, recruitment service, follow up, information and advertisement).
- b) Visiting companies and firms.
- c) Dealing with grants and subsidies to firms.
- d) Activities in groups of employers.
- e) Other kinds of firm oriented work.

## **2. Differences in Implementation:**

### *The Placement Service Study*

By interviews with the manager, one placement officer and one educational guidance officer at each office in the sample together with questionnaires to all members of staff and information from the statistical systems to follow-up the local operational goals for the offices, it was possible to settle differences in the following internal independent variables:

- the organisation and technical equipment of the offices
- the degree of individually oriented and firm oriented work (differences in working time spent providing assistance and administrative activities). (For an example see Table 3 in Appendices)
- the fulfilment and priority of local operational goals
- the volume and composition of labour market programmes.

### *The Labour Market Training Study*

In the same way as in the Placement Service Study information was collected by interviews and questionnaires. Differences in the following independent variables could be verified:

- the ability to assort the applicants for work after their need for service
- the intensity of contacts with firms
- the fraction of motivated applicants in the target group
- the degree of consistency between the labour market training courses arranged by the office and the vacancies registered
- the degree of centralised procurement of training courses and local influence on the composition of training courses.

### *The Study on Firm Oriented Work*

Information on differences in the internal independent variable was above all collected by questionnaires about the working time spent on the different components of firm oriented work. The information was supplemented by interviews.



It could be seen that the time spent on firm oriented work varied, above all depending on what kind of employment region the office was situated in. The offices in the city regions spent less time on firm oriented work (above all for the component "visits at firms and companies"). On the average there had been a decrease in the time spent for firm oriented work over the last year. Especially was this the case for the component "visits at firms and companies".

The clearest difference among the components in the independent variable was found to be in the time spent on "individualised service to employers".

## **VI. Results concerning Efficiency and Obstacles to Efficiency**

### *The Placement Service Study*

It was possible to establish a relationship between the capacity of the employment offices to offer self-service facilities to their clients, the composition of labour market programmes and the dependent variable. The capacity to offer self-service was measured as differences in standards of technology for the reception of clients and in the working time which was spent providing assistance for the self-service facilities.

Table 4 in the Appendices summarises some main results from the comparisons. There are significant differences in outcome for three of the four matched pairs studied. The plus signs (denoting differences) for internal variables are not randomly distributed. Above all there is a relationship between the capacity of the employment offices to offer self-service facilities to their clients, the equipment of the customer reception, the composition of labour market programmes, and the dependent variables (the outcome).

More specifically, the high-achieving offices were found to

- provide better customer receptions with well-equipped client reception areas organised as working places for the clients with internet links to information on vacancies and applicants for work supplemented with provision of assistance for self-service,
- place a higher fraction of those in labour market programmes in labour market training programmes.

There was also a tendency that the more efficient offices to a higher degree used working methods which focused on vacancies and firms (they were more "firm oriented" than "job-seeker oriented").

Furthermore the comparisons indicated that the more efficient offices to a higher degree could sort out the applicants for work who were ready for job placement from efficiency other applicants with comparatively less resources for individual service. And the in outcome (job placement and vacancies filled) did not affect the fulfilment of the local operational goals of long-term unemployment and long-term registration negatively, rather the opposite.

The fact that one office is assessed as being more efficient than the other office in its pair does not exclude the fact that there is scope for improvement. Through interviews with managers of offices and representatives of other members of staff it emerged that major obstacles for greater efficiency where arranging jobs on the open market and places in labour market training were:

- conflicting objectives between operational goals (the 1997-objective on the number of job seekers in programme participation conflicted other objectives, as that for training)
- differences in registration routines and problems in the office organisation
- sluggishness in the allocation of resources.

### *The Labour Market Training Study*

The objective of labour market training – considered as one of the most important growth instruments of the labour market policy – is that it should be vocationally oriented. It is expected to lead to jobs. The efficiency of the labour market training programme has therefore been assessed on the basis of its capacity to contribute to enabling participants in the programme obtain jobs on the open market.

This study shows that there is a clear relationship between different methods of working with labour market training and the degree to which participants in labour market programmes obtain a job on completion of their training.

The more efficient offices have the following qualities:

- they are more capable of classifying new job applicants and dimensioning counselling service on the basis of the needs of service of the applicants (as opposed to a higher degree of "equal treatment for all" in the less efficient offices).

- they are characterized by working methods which focus on jobs and firms. This is shown, among other things, in a capacity to use labour market training programmes for a more strategic and growth oriented role than other programmes and in the fact that they give priority to systematic contacts with firms.
- they are more selective in their choice of participants for labour market training. Their target groups for training tend to consist of well-motivated individuals who are better equipped from the labour market perspective. Furthermore greater demands are made on participants in labour market training programmes: that they should be prepared to commute or move to the place where the training programme is held and to the job.
- they tend to use special methods to adapt training to market needs, for example by tailoring training to meet the needs of the employers and the individuals and by the so called "recruitment training".
- they devote more attention to follow up participants in the labour market training programmes, combined with intensified efforts to find jobs at the end of training programmes.

The operational goal for training, that specified that the proportion of participants who obtained a job within 90 days after completion of a vocationally oriented labour market training shall amount to at least 70 per cent, seemed to have led to undesired effects. There had been a shift of emphasis in the use of resources towards a focus on different forms of preparatory training.

### *The Study on Firm Oriented Work*

The results from this study confirmed the results from the two earlier studies that more of firm oriented work had a positive effect on job placement and vacancies filled. The total time spent on firm oriented work seemed to be of higher importance for the outcome than the composition of this work. But there was a tendency that the most successful offices had spent more time on the component "individualised service to employers" (matching and recruitment service). Yet these offices had reached their local operational goals concerning long term unemployed and long term registration to the same extent as the other offices.

A successful firm oriented work was found to be characterized by

- a clear strategy and priority of firm oriented work
- employer influence over training programme for applicants for work

- visits at firms and companies as means to deepening knowledge on the activities of the firms and their need for labour
- recruitment service and active matching
- dialogue with employers in order to be able to adjust the claim of qualifications.

Obstacles to an efficient firm oriented work were found to be in the composition of the operational goals (only one or perhaps two, the first two, out of seven goals were directed towards firms; see section I, "Official Goals..."), in the system of resource allocation and in the new activity "aktivitetsgaranti".

## **VII. Recommendations**

### *The Placement Service Study*

The RRV recommended in the report:

- that the job seekers are given a more and highly differentiated and individually adapted service,
- that the programmes for self-service, computerisation of reception areas for clients, and internet services are extended,
- that the National Labour Market Board and the employment offices give greater priority to contacts with firms and services to employers in order to be able to better match vacancies and job seekers,
- that an overview is made of operational goals in order to ensure that these goals better support the overriding goals of reducing unemployment and increasing gainful employment,
- that measures are taken to stimulate a better and more efficient balance in the use of labour market training and employment measures with large displacement effects.

The trend after 1997 towards a greater degree of self-service in employment offices through the provision of technically well-equipped reception areas for clients has provided greater opportunities for the employment offices to direct their personnel resources to areas where they are most needed, i.e. where the need of offices inputs is assessed greatest. The RRV therefore meant that it should be carefully considered in this context how "idle" staff resources (thanks to a greater capacity to offer self-service) can be best used.

### *The Labour Market Training Study*

The RRV recommended that the labour market agencies develop methods for recruitment of participants in labour market training programmes in close cooperation with the market (in the form of recruitment training, job guarantees, training programmes located in companies etc.).

In the opinion of RRV the most effective and appropriate way of organising the procurement of labour market training and distribute the responsibility between local and regional level varies between the regions. A relatively high degree of centralisation in the procurement procedures in the region (at the county labour boards or large employment offices) should however, release local resources for making comprehensive market assessments. This would also permit the development and maintenance of high levels of professional skills.

The RRV recommended that the labour market agencies work more actively at various levels in order to develop forms of agreement with training programme arrangers. Greater attention should be devoted to the systematic follow-up of participants in the labour market training programmes together with the responsibility for intensified efforts to find jobs for participants at the end of courses.

### *The Study on Firm Oriented Work*

The RRV recommended that the Public Employment Service Offices should be stimulated to increase their contacts with firms and companies and increase their service to employers in order to get more possibilities to an efficient internal matching and better outcome of labour market training. To strengthen its role of broker between employers and applicants for work, a placement officer in general should be responsible both for the applicants and the contacts with firms within a certain occupation or branch. Another efficient way to work can be that a placement officer with many contacts with firms is responsible only for applicants ready for a job on the open market.

According to RRV the firms should be able to take a greater part in the work aiming to increase the competence of the applicants for work (be given more influence over different programmes).

## VIII. Conclusions

The three studies show that differences in the implementation of labour market policy on office level have measurable effects on the outcome of job placements and vacancies filled, i. e. the internal office work affects the fulfilment of the overriding goals.

Given the operationalised overriding goals and the effectiveness goals it has been possible to identify internal employment office management practices that are conducive to good performance.

But these studies can not answer the questions about the magnitude of the implementation effects on macro level or how effective the contemporary system of Public Employment Offices is in relation to some alternative system.

However, from the point of view of the goals which were valid and the given labour market policy institutions, the development of different market shares for the Public Employment Service indicates less possibilities and a decreasing role for the Employment Service on the labour market. Since the decrease in work opportunities in the beginning of the 1990:s stabilised in 1994, the Public Employment Services market share of vacancies has decreased from 39 to 32 per cent, its share of the total number of applicants for work from 65 to 56 per cent and its share of recruitments from 14 to 11 per cent.

The consequences of this development are less internal matching possibilities for the Public Employment Service and thereby less opportunities to solve both its growth and its distributional tasks. In this context it is serious that the increased self-service possibilities via internet have not led to an increase of firm oriented work inside the Public Employment Service. That an increase in the contacts with firms and in the individual service to employers would increase the efficiency of the Public Employment Service is a result in all three studies.

One of the most important characteristics of good management practices according to the audits was to be able to offer a high degree of self-service and assistance for self-service. The trend during the late 1990's towards more of self-service has been taken as an opportunity to redistribute the resources in favour of more individualised service to the most hard to place; the introduction of "aktivitetsgaranti" during the year 2000. But according to other important characteristics of good practices this might be a good idea only as long as it does not lead to less of firm oriented work.

## Appendices

**Table 1: Similarity between offices in external independent variables:  
examples from The Placement Service Study**

The Forest County Pair

	Office A	Office B
Number of staff	18	21
Number of reg. applicants/vacancy	3.2	3.9
Fraction of non Nordic applicants	3.8 %	4.8 %
Fraction of handicapped	12.3 %	12.9 %

The Capital Area Pair

	Office A	Office B
Number of staff	26	27
Number of reg. applicants/vacancy	2.4	2.3
Fraction of non Nordic applicants	18.8 %	14.5 %
Fraction of handicapped	0.9 %	0.2 %

Source: Händel, AMS

**Table 2: Comparison on Goal Fulfilment: example from The Placement Service Study**  
The Forest County Pair

	The fraction of applicants who got a job	The fraction of Participants in Programmes who got a job	The fraction of vacancies filled by referrals	The fraction of referred applicants who got the referred job
Office A	22	23	44	45
Office B	16	17	36	20

Source: Händel, AMS

**Table 3: Fractions of total working time devoted to different activities: example from The Placement Service Study**  
The Forest County Pair

	Office A	Office B
Individual service to applicants	50 %	60 %
Individual service to employers	20 %	15 %
(whereof matching	15 %	5 %)
Direct/ self-service	20 %	10 %
Group activities	5 %	5 %
Others	5 %	10 %
Total	100 %	100 %

Source: Questionnaires

**Table 4: Pair-wise Comparisons of Internal Independent Variables and Labour Market Outcomes (Job Placements and Vacancies filled): The Placement Service Study**

Internal Variables							Outcome
Offices		Customer reception	Self-service	Local goals	ALMP placement	ALMP mix	Placements, vacancies filled
Forest counties	A	+	+	0	+	+	+
	B						
Stockholm	A	+	+	+	+	+	+
	B						
Southern cities	A	+	+	+	0	+	+
	B						
County towns	A	0	0		+	0	0
	B			+			

Note: A "+" denotes that the office in question has been found to exhibit a higher quality (more workplaces with internet links) in its reception for clients, given more assistance to self-service, fulfilled more of its local goals, given a higher fraction of the job applicants access to labour market programmes, placed a larger fraction of the participants in programmes in labour market training and, finally, showed better outcomes in terms of job placements and vacancies filled. A "0" indicates no (significant) difference.



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